

REMARKS

The present invention relates to a chair having a backrest portion that can recline in response to pressure exerted thereon by a user's back, the backrest including in its interior a fluid-containing cushion that provides automatic self-adjusting resilience and support for the user's lumbar region as the backrest moves through its range of motion.

The specification has been amended at paragraph [0025] to more accurately describe the invention. In the preferred embodiment, the fluid-containing cushion is hermetically sealed with a predetermined amount of fluid contained therein, and the amount of fluid is not adjustable by the user. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the backrest tilts through a range of motion, and that the fluid-containing cushion provides automatically adjusted support of the user's lumbar region as the backrest tilts through its range of motion. These limitations were previously recited in former independent claim 12, which is now cancelled. Claim 13, which previously depended from claim 12, has been amended to depend from claim 1.

It is respectfully submitted that the foregoing amendments to the claims are sufficient to overcome the various rejections of the claims for anticipation, for the following reasons.

1. Parrish - U.S. 5,556,169

The '169 patent discloses a system comprising two fluid layers. The first layer contains fluid and beads. The second layer is behind the first layer and contains fluid only. A person reclines against the first layer to redistribute the beads. Fluid is introduced into the second layer to exert force against the first layer and further conform the first layer to the contours of the supported body. Then, "fluid is evacuated from the first layer to inhibit the motion of the beads and to set the first layer to a rigid shape which follows the contours of the body." (Col. 3, lines 3-6). "Therefore, the finished conformed support surface has an evacuated, rigid first layer to

support the body and an inflated second layer to cushion and support the body and first layer on the solid seat frame." (Col. 3, lines 16-20).

The structure as disclosed in Parrish does not anticipate the pending claims of this application, as amended. Claim 1 recites a chair having a backrest tiltable through a range of motion, with a fluid-containing cushion providing support that automatically adjusts to support a user's lumbar region as the backrest tilts through its range of motion. The '169 patent does not disclose a chair having a back rest that tilts through a range of motion. Moreover, since the first layer of the '169 device rigidly conforms to the supported body, it could not adjust as the supported body extends when a chair back rest reclines. Accordingly, the '169 patent does not anticipate the amended claim 1, or any of the remaining claims, each of which depends from claim 1 either directly or indirectly.

2. Ridder - U.S. 5,860,705

This reference discloses a chair or arm chair in which both the seat and back contain a cushion filled with water or similar non-compressible material, the seat and back cushions being connected to one another by one or more channels through which fluid can flow from one cushion to the other. When a user sits in the chair, fluid will be forced from the seat cushion upwardly into the back cushion.

The Ridder reference does not disclose a chair in which the backrest is tiltable through a range of motion. Nor does the Ridder reference disclose that the cushion in the backrest will automatically adjust to support a user as the backrest tilts through a range of motion. Accordingly, the Ridder '705 reference does not anticipate the amended claims.

3. Park et al. - U.S. 2004/0021361 A1

The Park reference discloses a seat cushion assembly including a porous cushioning member. Of the Figures 5, 6, and 9 cited by the Examiner, only FIG. 9 shows a cushioned back rest. FIG. 9 shows the in-use configuration of the third embodiment of the invention, shown in FIG. 7 (¶ 0044). When a load is placed on the seat portion, air flows through a tube from the seat portion to the back portion (¶ 0046). The seat cushion assembly is placed on a chair C (¶ 0056).

In the Park reference, the back portion of the chair C is not described or illustrated as having a seat back that is tiltable through a range of motion. Nor does the Park reference disclose that the cushion in the backrest will automatically adjust to support the lumbar region of a user as the backrest tilts through a range of motion. Accordingly, the Park reference does not anticipate claim 1 as amended, or any of the other claims that depend from claim 1.

4. Lin - U.S. 2004/0232756 A1

The Lin reference discloses a cushion structure for use in a baby stroller. The strollers intended for use with the disclosed cushion structure are illustrated in FIGS. 7 and 10 as being of the collapsible tubular frame construction with a cloth mounted on the tubes to hold the infant, commonly known as an "umbrella" stroller.

The illustrated strollers do not have a backrest portion "comprising a substantially rigid support member for support of a user's back" as recited in claim 1. Nor does the illustrated stroller have a backrest portion that is tiltable through a range of motion, as recited in claim 1 as amended. The Lin reference further does not disclose that the described cushion provides automatically adjusted support of the user's back as the backrest tilts through its range of motion. Further, the pressure in the Lin structure is adjustable through "faucet" 25, such that the Lin

structure is not "hermetically sealed" as recited in dependent claim 3. Accordingly, claim 1 as amended, and the remaining claims that depend from claim 1 either directly or indirectly, are not anticipated by the Lin reference.

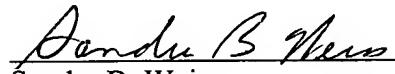
5. Catelas - FR 2557441

The Catelas reference discloses a chair of the type known in the office furniture industry as a "task chair." This reference, like the previously cited references, does not disclose a chair having a backrest that is tilttable through a range of motion, nor does it disclose a cushion that provides automatically adjusted support of the user's lumbar region as the backrest tilts through its range of motion. Accordingly, none of the claims, as amended, is anticipated by the Catelas reference.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the grounds of rejection are overcome, and a Notice of Allowance is requested.

Also submitted herewith is a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra B. Weiss
Reg. No. 30,814
JONES DAY
77 West Wacker
Chicago, Illinois 60601-1692
(312) 782-3939